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ESTABLISHMENT OF A NUCLEAR-WEAPON-FREE ZONE IN SOUTH ASIA

CONCLUSION OF EFFECTIVE INTERNATIONAL ARRANGEMENTS TO ASSURE NON-NUCLEAR-WEAPON STATES AGAINST THE USE OR THREAT OF USE OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

REGIONAL DISARMAMENT

CONVENTIONAL ARMS CONTROL AT THE REGIONAL AND SUBREGIONAL LEVELS

REVIEW OF THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE DECLARATION ON THE STRENGTHENING OF INTERNATIONAL SECURITY

Letter dated 25 October 1996 from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General

In her address to the General Assembly on 3 October 1996, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, proposed the convening of a conference on peace and security, arms control and non-proliferation in South Asia.

Under the instructions of my Government, I am enclosing a memorandum which explains the proposal of the Prime Minister of Pakistan.

It is requested that the memorandum be circulated as a document of the First Committee, under agenda items 68, 69, 71 (g) and (h) and 81.

(Signed) Ahmad KAMAL
Ambassador
Permanent Representative of Pakistan
to the United Nations

ANNEX

Conference on peace and security, arms control and non-proliferation in South Asia

1. In her statement to the United Nations General Assembly on 3 October 1996, Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, Prime Minister of Pakistan, proposed the convening of a multilateral conference on peace and security in South Asia.

2. There is considerable international concern about the dangers in South Asia of an armed conflict, escalation of a conventional arms race and nuclear weapons proliferation.

3. The underlying causes of tension in South Asia are well known: the Kashmir dispute and several bilateral problems between India and Pakistan. Pakistan desires a genuine dialogue with India which should, first and foremost, evolve a solution to the Kashmir dispute in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the United Nations Security Council.

4. Bilateral talks need to be complemented and facilitated by measures and steps at the regional, multilateral and international levels.

5. In response to proposals for bilateral and regional solutions to arms control and non-proliferation in South Asia, India has often called for measures that are trans-regional or global in scope, taking into account the interaction of external factors with the security environment in South Asia. In 1991, proposals were made by the United States of America and Pakistan, separately, for talks on security and non-proliferation in South Asia in which it was suggested that, besides India and Pakistan, the United States, the Russian Federation and China could also participate. India however expressed the desire for a wider scope and participation for such talks.

6. The proposal of the Prime Minister of Pakistan responds to this desire. It suggests that besides India and Pakistan, the five permanent members of the Security Council as well as other major countries which may be in a position to contribute to South Asian security - such as Germany and Japan - should also participate in the proposed conference. Other countries could be included through mutual agreement.

7. Pakistan believes that the following three dimensions of the security situation in South Asia are interrelated and deserve to be addressed in an integrated way:

(a) The underlying causes of conflict and tensions between India and Pakistan, including Kashmir;

(b) Conventional arms control and confidence-building measures;

(c) Measures for nuclear restraint and avoidance of nuclear weapons proliferation and deployment.

8. The multilateral forum could assist in easing tensions and disputes in South Asia by facilitating and complementing bilateral talks between Pakistan and India whenever they are resumed through mutual agreement.

9. The conference could promote conventional arms control and ease tensions, inter alia, through the following:

(a) A possible agreement between India and Pakistan on a mutually negotiated ratio of conventional forces;

(b) Measures to prevent a surprise attack by either country;

(c) Acceptance of a set of "principles" for future conventional arms production, acquisitions and deployments to ensure the maintenance of military equilibrium in South Asia.

10. In the past, India and Pakistan have succeeded in concluding several agreements for confidence-building measures including agreements not to attack each other's nuclear facilities, to provide advance notification of large troop movements and exercises and prevent air violations. The talks could secure the full implementation of these confidence-building measures and explore new measures to enhance mutual confidence.

11. The proposed talks could address the bilateral, regional and global dimensions of the nuclear danger confronting South Asia. Pakistan has advanced a series of proposals in the regional context:

(a) The creation of a nuclear-weapon-free zone in South Asia;

(b) Simultaneous signature of the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons by India and Pakistan;

(c) Simultaneous acceptance of full-scope safeguards;

(d) Mutual inspections of nuclear facilities;

(e) A bilateral nuclear-test ban.

12. These proposals remain relevant in the context of South Asia. At the same time, Pakistan would be prepared to consider any suggestions which India or other participants may put forward to arrest the nuclear threat in South Asia.

13. A particularly urgent concern in South Asia is the development and possible deployment of nuclear-capable ballistic missiles. This will exacerbate an already volatile security environment. Pakistan has proposed the creation of a "zero missile zone" in South Asia. This could be achieved through the implementation of progressive steps beginning with an understanding against the deployment of ballistic missiles and ending with an agreement to dismantle and place any existing missiles in secure and verifiable storage.

14. The multilateral talks could also seek to promote global initiatives to enhance disarmament, non-proliferation and security in South Asia. This could

include consideration of the political or other steps required to secure India's agreement to sign and ratify the recently concluded Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty. They could also help in devising an agreed approach to the proposed global convention to ban the production of fissile materials.

15. Pakistan is open to other suggestions from India and other States regarding the substance and the process envisaged in the proposed multilateral talks.

16. As the Prime Minister of Pakistan has stated, we hope the international community will endorse and support this proposal, which can make a vital contribution to the preservation and promotion of international peace and security as well as conventional and nuclear arms restraint and disarmament at the regional and global levels.